

WEEK

ONE

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

See the Getting Ready pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare. Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- Opener
- Worship
- Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are listed as optional)
- Conversation Starter
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Application Activity: Take a Snapshot
2. Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions
3. Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You
4. Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Devotionals for Kids
- Parent Cue Card (print or email)
- [Parent Cue App](#) and [ParentCue.org](#)

✦ Need activities for a K-5th group? Check out the 2nd-3rd grade guide.

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

1 Kings 18:16-45

Conversation Starter

What seems impossible to you?

Bottom Line

God can do the impossible.

Memory Verse

"Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak.

Proverbs 16:16 NIV



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a special need, learning difference, or disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro tips.

SOCIAL

Opening Activity

What You Need

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ "Image Cards" Activity Page
- ☐ Scotch tape



Inclusive Pro Tips



Instead of running, try this seated version:

- Give each kid a card and divide the group into two teams. Tell them not to show anyone yet.
- Teams take turns helping their teammates guess what's on their cards using clues.
- The first team to guess all of their cards correctly wins!

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God that your confidence is grounded in Him, not in how capable or impressive you feel. Recall an age-appropriate story about a time when you felt outnumbered or unsure but chose to trust God anyway. Thank God for how He showed up! Ask God to meet preteens in their moments of self-doubt or peer pressure. Pray they would believe that trusting God when it's not popular is still worth it, and that He can do the impossible in their everyday lives.

1. Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high-five, fist bump, or a wave.
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.

Play Together

1. Before you begin, show and name each "Image Cards" Activity Page card.
→ Fire, water, a log, and a jar.
2. Encourage the kids to stand in separate areas of your group space.
3. Tape one card (face out) on each kid's back. Tell the kid what is on their back, but try not to let anyone else see the card that is on the kid's back.
4. Share the goal:
→ "One at a time, one person will come to the center. All of the other kids will try to figure out what's taped to that kid's back by moving quickly enough to see it! If you're in the middle and someone shouts out what's on your back, you're out, and I will choose another kid to go."
5. Repeat until every kid has had a chance to play.

② What You Say

"You all are SO fast, and that was really fun! You had no idea what was on the other kids' backs, but you went for it! Water, fire, logs, and a jar?"

"This might've seemed like just a silly game, but we'll hear more about these things today in our true story from the Bible, where a man named Elijah showed us what it means to put our confidence in the one and only true God. Come with me!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/5

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No supplies needed



Inclusive Pro Tips

For an option with less movement, complete this activity with everyone seated. The kids can point to their choices.

① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into three groups.

Imagine Together

1. Say, "I am going to share several scenarios. For each scenario, I'll also share two possible responses you could have to each scenario. I'll point to the side of the room that corresponds with each response. With your group, talk about what trusting God might look like in each scenario, and then as a group, travel to one side of the room or the other."
2. One at a time, call out the "What's My Move?" scenarios and point to the side of the room that corresponds with each response.
3. Give the groups a moment to think, talk, and travel to the side of their choice together.

"What's My Move?" Scenarios

1. I feel scared about trying something new.
→ Pray and wait on God OR try it even if I still feel afraid.
2. When I know someone who's hurting.
→ Send them a message OR go talk to them and let them know I care.
3. When I don't understand what God is doing.
→ Ask questions and look for answers in the Bible OR trust that I may not know right now and that's okay.
4. When you want to share your faith.
→ Invite someone to church OR be a good friend and let them see how much Jesus loves them by the way you treat them.
5. When life feels too hard or too big ...
→ Tell a trusted adult or friend what you're going through OR take some quiet time to talk it out with God.
6. A friend did something that hurt you.
→ Choose to forgive right away, OR take time to pray and ask God for help forgiving.

Talk Together

- *NOTE: Point out that all of those answers could've been the right move. Encourage the kids to listen to God, pray, and act boldly in confidence trusting that He goes with them in everything!*
1. Why didn't Elijah back down when everything else around him was hopeless?
 2. How does it help to know the Holy Spirit is in you if you've chosen to follow Jesus?
 3. Say: "God can do the impossible! Sometimes, you still might not know what to do next. And although your next choice may not be clear, there is one thing that is clear: following God and His ways is always the right move. Elijah didn't know how things would turn out, but he just followed God, and God showed up. That is all God asks of you too!"

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ "Confidence Cards" Activity Page
- ☐ Floor tape
- ☐ Plain paper
- ☐ Pencils

Inclusive Pro Tips



Instead of running, give each team 3-4 cards and invite them to complete the challenges sitting at a table or on the floor.

① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into teams of 3-4.
2. Give every group:
 - One Bible
 - One plain piece of paper
 - One pencil
3. Use floor tape to mark a start line for each team.
4. On the opposite end of your group space, scatter the "Confidence Cards."

Move Together

1. Say: "Each team will take turns sending one kid to grab a card from the far side of the room. When you get a card, bring it back to your group. Read it out loud and work together to complete what it says."
2. Encourage each group to discuss the questions and follow the prompts to either:
 - Write or draw their response on paper.
 - Act it out.
3. Once their group finishes that card's challenge, the next teammate can go!
4. Continue until every kid gets a chance to grab a Confidence Card.
5. Gather the kids and review possible answers to each challenge.

Make It Personal → Tell the kids about an age-appropriate time you chose to trust God during a tough season. Did you move to a new city? Maybe choosing to trust God didn't make you feel better right away, but it made you feel stronger—because you knew God was with you!

Preteen

Small Group

November — Week 1

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed



① What You Do

1. What's the difference between confidence in God and confidence in yourself? Can you think of a time when you needed both?
2. God burned up the soaked offering and the stones. Why do you think He wanted to put on such a show?
3. How will it make you more confident if you trust that God is with you in everything you face?
4. How can you help yourself remember that God is the strongest and He goes with you everywhere?

Inclusive Pro Tips



Be sensitive to kids who may need extra time to process their thoughts and respond. Be patient and create a safe space where everyone has a chance to share when they're ready.

Frequently check for understanding during discussion by asking questions like, "Can someone share in their own words what we're talking about?"

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Plain paper
- ☐ Coloring supplies

Inclusive Pro Tips



If it's more comfortable for your kids to create motions to remember Isaiah 40:31, invite them to come up with a movement for each part of the verse.

① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into groups of two or three.
2. Give each group a Bible.
3. Invite them to look up Isaiah 40:31 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.
4. Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids, and repeat the verse together several times.

Create Together

1. Give each group a piece of plain paper.
2. Set out the coloring supplies.
3. Challenge each group to come up with 4-5 simple symbols (or emojis) that could represent key parts of the verse.
For example, if using NIV, encourage the kids to break the verse up like this:
 - Those who trust in the LORD,
 - will receive new strength.
 - They will fly as high as eagles.
 - They will run and not get tired.
 - They will walk and not grow weak.

If using the NIV, encourage the kids to break the verse up like this:

- Those who hope in the LORD
- will renew their strength.
- They will soar on wings like eagles;
- they will run and not grow weary.
- they will walk and not be faint.

4. Encourage the kids to work together to draw their symbols on plain paper with coloring supplies.
5. Once everyone is finished, invite several groups to share their symbols and why they chose them.

Talk Together

1. Ask:
 - What do you think it means to trust in the Lord?
 - Why do you think new strength is a gift God gives when you trust Him?
2. Say, "The symbols you made can help you carry Isaiah 40:31 with you everywhere you go. Whether you feel tired, alone, or hopeless, you can always trust God to give you strength!"

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders

- ① Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for.
- ② When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers.
- ③ Once they find the chapter, explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

GROUPS 5/5

Make It Personal with Prayer



Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Large blocks
- ☐ Pens or pencils
- ☐ Sticky notes
- ☐ Device for playing worship music

① What You Do

1. Gather the kids together in a circle.
2. Begin playing the worship music softly.
3. Give every kid:
 - One block
 - One sticky note
 - One pen or pencil
4. Say: "We will all face things that feel tough or impossible."
5. Invite them to take a moment and think about something in their lives that feels that way.
 - Maybe they're struggling to make friends at a new school, or maybe they're ready to give up on learning a new skill.
6. Invite the kids to draw or write that "impossible thing" on their sticky note.
7. *NOTE: Use this opportunity to have a conversation about what it means to make a decision to follow Jesus! (bit.ly/4daxSUg) If you need help with what to say ask your ministry leader.*
8. Once they're ready, encourage each kid to:
 - Bring the block to the center of the circle.
 - Add it to the group tower or stack.
 - Whisper or silently say aloud a short prayer like, "God, I trust You with this."
9. *NOTE: Let them know they can place their block and sticky note face down on the tower if they prefer to keep it private.*
10. Close the group in prayer. Ask God to help the kids trust that He goes with them in everything they face. Ask God to help them remember that they can go through life confidently because the strongest goes with them! His presence with them in everything will be a firm foundation for each of their lives!

Inclusive Pro Tips



Create the tower on a tabletop or raised surface to meet the needs of your group.

Getting Ready

Social

Welcome the kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Use this time to create space for them to connect with you and with each other by playing age-appropriate games, asking fun questions, and encouraging friendly interactions. This is a great moment to help kids feel seen, known, and ready to experience today's story.

Groups

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

Social

Opening Activity

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Print "Image Cards" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one card for every kid
- ☐ Scotch tape, one roll for each Small Group

Groups

Take a Snapshot

→ No Supplies Needed

Bible Story Extension

- ☐ Bibles, one for every three kids
- ☐ Print "Confidence Cards" on paper and cut apart, two sets for each Small Group
- ☐ Plain paper, one sheet for every three kids
- ☐ Pencils, one for every three kids
- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group

Discussion Questions

→ No Supplies Needed

Verses to Take with You

- ☐ Bibles, one for every two kids
- ☐ Plain paper, one for every two kids
- ☐ Coloring supplies, enough for each Small Group to share

Make It Personal with Prayer

- ☐ Large blocks, one for every kid
- ☐ Pens or pencils, one for every kid
- ☐ Sticky notes, one for every kid
- ☐ Device for playing worship music, one for each Small Group

Home

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue app** and **ParentCue.org**

WEEK

TWO

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

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Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- Opener
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- Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are listed as optional)
- Conversation Starter
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Application Activity: Take a Snapshot
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Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Devotionals for Kids
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✦ Need activities for a K-5th group? Check out the 2nd-3rd grade guide.



THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Jonah

Jonah 1-3

Conversation Starter

What keeps people from doing what's best?

Bottom Line

God knows what's best.

Memory Verse

"Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak"

Isaiah 40:31 (NirV)



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a special need, learning difference, or disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro tips.

SOCIAL

Opening Activity



What You Need

- ☐ Offering Container
- ☐ "Can't Be Done" Activity Page
- ☐ Bowl
- ☐ Timer
- ☐ Plastic spoons
- ☐ Plain paper
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Painter's tape

Inclusive Pro Tips



If your group isn't comfortable with physical challenges, you can throw in brain teasers or group "impossible" riddles.

- Count from 1 to 30, but say "bop" instead of any number with a 3 in it (3, 13, 23).
- Name every vowel in the alphabet backwards.

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for your group before they arrive. Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God that He never stops pursuing us, not even when we mess up or try to hide. Recall an age-appropriate story about a moment when you felt like avoiding God, but His love pulled you back in. Ask God to remind preteens that His presence doesn't leave when they make a mistake, feel ashamed, or feel like giving up. Pray that your group would know deep in their hearts they are never too far gone for God to reach and He is still calling them by name!

1. Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high-five, fist bump, or a wave.
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
3. Before you begin:
 - Place the "Can't Be Done" Activity Page cards in the bowl.
 - Use painter's tape to make a bold "challenge line" across your group area.
4. As kids come in, say with energy: "Welcome to the 'Can't Be Done' Challenge!"
5. Explain: "You'll have the chance to face challenges that seem pretty tough or maybe even impossible! For each one, you get to decide to step up and try it, or hang back."
6. Read a challenge card.
7. If a kid wants to try, invite them to step over the line and try. If they're not feeling it, they can observe.
8. Cheer on every attempt, no matter the result!
9. *NOTE: For an extra challenge, let the kids suggest their own "impossible" challenges at the end!*
10. Gather the group to discuss.

② What You Say

"Wow! You all are so brave for attempting these challenges! Some of them were pretty tough, right? Sometimes, stuff just feels out of reach, like there's no way you could do it. Has there ever been a time when you felt like you couldn't do something, or you just didn't want to do what you were asked?"

"In today's true story from the Bible, we'll hear about a man named Jonah who may have felt the same way! God asked Jonah to do something that Jonah didn't want to do! But here's the thing: God always knows what's best, even when we don't understand why He's asking us to do something. Let's go discover what happens when we trust God, even when trusting Him feels impossible!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/5

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ *Optional: coloring supplies*



① What You Do

1. Gather the kids together in a circle.
2. Give each kid four index cards.
3. Say, "We're going to imagine moments in life when we have a choice to make. Sometimes it's easy to do what's right, and other times it's harder to follow God's best. Let's talk about it together!"
4. Read a scenario from the list below one at a time.
5. After each scenario, ask:
 - "What might keep someone from doing what's best here?"
 - "What would it look like to trust God instead?"
 - "Why is God's way better in this scenario?"
6. Give the kids a moment to write a quick word or draw a tiny picture on a sticky note or index card to record their answer.
7. *Optional: Allow the kids to use coloring supplies for their pictures.*
8. Invite a few kids to share and set their index cards in the center of the circle.

Scenarios

1. You know you should apologize to a friend after hurting their feelings, but you're embarrassed or angry.
2. You sense God wants you to invite a friend to church, but you're scared they'll say no.
3. The Holy Spirit helps you see that you need to be honest about a bad choice you made at school or at home, even though it might get you in trouble.
4. You're at a friend's house and they're watching something on YouTube that you've never seen before. You sense God telling you to speak up and walk away.

Inclusive Pro Tips



If the kids aren't comfortable sharing out loud, let them place their index cards in the center of the circle.

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Floor tape
- ☐ Timer

Inclusive Pro Tips

For a version with less movement, encourage the teams to write and create a design with their index cards seated at a table or on the floor.



① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into two teams.
2. Use the floor tape to mark a start line for each team on one side of your group area.
3. Mark a 'build zone' on the other side.
4. Give each team a stack of index cards and several pencils.

Move Together:

1. Explain how to play:
 - Say, "When I say 'Go!', your team will brainstorm people or sources you listen to or take advice from. Write one person or thing per index card, like 'teacher' or even 'myself.'"
 - "After writing a card, one kid from your team can run to the 'build zone' and add that card to start a flat structure, in any design!"
 - The teams will keep writing and running until the time is up (3 to 5 minutes).
2. Once the time is up, have each team show off their structure and read their cards aloud without disturbing the structure.
3. **NOTE:** If "God" is missing from their structure, don't worry! You'll talk about it in the next section.

Talk Together:

1. Ask: "Which of these voices do you think really knows you best?"
 - **NOTE:** Affirm that parents and trusted adults love us and know us, and that's great!
2. Explain: "We all listen to many voices every day (friends, teachers, parents, the internet, and even ourselves). Only one voice ALWAYS knows what's best, and it's God!"
3. Say, "Even Jonah knew all about God, and still chose to listen to his own ideas instead of following God's way at first. Jonah didn't want to show kindness to the Ninevites, and God wanted to."
4. **NOTE:** If the kids didn't write "God," invite them to write "God" on an index card and stick it at the very top of their structure.
5. Say: "God is good, His ways are good, and He is always working for good! When you're honest, people can trust you. When you're kind, people see that God values them. When you forgive someone who has hurt you, you help get out the poison from your heart. Truthfulness, kindness, and forgiveness are all God's ways, and they build good things! You can trust God and obey Him because He always knows what's best! Good is all He ever knows to do!"

Make It Personal → Share about a time you had to decide whose advice to follow, and what happened when you chose God's way. Why was God's way better?

Preteen

Small Group

November — Week 2

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed



① What You Do

1. Why do you think Jonah ran from God's instructions?
2. What are some ways you've seen following God's ways grow goodness in your life or in the world?
3. God is always, always working for good in your life. How can you remember that when you don't want to do something He wants you to do?
4. Jonah didn't get it right the first time, and God gave him a second chance. What does that teach you about who God is?
5. Do you think it means more to God if you obey Him out of love or if you just obey Him?

Inclusive Pro Tips



Be sensitive to kids who may need extra time to process their thoughts and respond. Be patient and create a safe space where everyone has a chance to share when they're ready.

Frequently check for understanding during discussion by asking questions like, "Can someone share in their own words what we're talking about?"

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ "Mine the Verse" Activity Page
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Coloring supplies



Inclusive Pro Tips

Let the kids doodle or create symbols for each phrase if you have visual learners in your group.

Read the questions aloud and walk through the activity page as a group if that works better for your few.

① What You Do

1. Give every kid a Bible.
2. Invite them to find Isaiah 40:31 using the Bible Navigation Tips.
3. Ask if there are any words that are unfamiliar to them in the verse.
4. Repeat the verse together.

Create Together:

1. Divide the kids into pairs. (It's okay if there's a group of three!)
2. Give every kid a "Mine the Verse" Activity Page.
3. Make pencils and coloring supplies available for the groups to share.
4. Say, "Today we're going to 'mine' through Isaiah 40:31 to understand what it means for us! Your group will read the verse together and follow the prompts on the page."
5. Invite the kids to use the coloring supplies and pencils to complete the page.

Talk Together:

1. Gather the kids together and review the "Mine the Verse" Activity Page.
2. Ask: Who do you think "those" and "they" refer to in Isaiah 40:31? Use the points below to spark conversation about what it means to follow Jesus.
 - "Those" or "They" in this verse refer to anyone who chooses to trust in the Lord! That includes people who were living in Isaiah's time, and it includes us today!
 - Jesus is the ultimate way we can trust God, because He died and rose again for our sins, making a way for us to be in relationship with God forever!
 - When we follow Jesus, He gives us strength daily through the Holy Spirit.
3. Ask: "How do you think trusting in Jesus can help you keep going, even when things are tough?"

→ *NOTE: Look for opportunities to have conversations about what it means to make a decision to follow Jesus! (If you need help with what to say, ask your ministry leader.)*

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders

- ① Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for.
- ② When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers.
- ③ Once they find the chapter, explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

GROUPS 5/5

Make It Personal with Prayer

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Pencils



① What You Do

1. Invite the kids to find their own quiet spot in your group area (encourage them to spread out, away from friends and distractions).
2. Encourage the kids to close their eyes or look down to help focus.
3. Explain that prayer is a conversation they can have with God at anytime, anywhere, about anything!
4. Say, "As you pray, ask God: 'Are there places in my life where I'm not really trusting that You know what's best?'"
5. Share some examples as the Holy Spirit speaks to every kid.
 - Is there a fight you keep having with your sibling, and do you care more about winning than making things right?
 - Are you afraid to stick up for someone in your class even though you know it's what God wants you to do?
 - Are you playing a game or watching something you know you probably shouldn't?
 - Do you sometimes say mean things before stopping to ask God to help you use words that point others to Him?
6. After two minutes of reflection, encourage the kids to use an index card and a pencil to write or draw about their prayer time.
7. Close in prayer. Thank God for always knowing what's best and for helping them trust Him more!

Getting Ready

Social

Welcome the kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Use this time to create space for them to connect with you and with each other by playing age-appropriate games, asking fun questions, and encouraging friendly interactions. This is a great moment to help kids feel seen, known, and ready to experience today's story.

Groups

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

Social

Opening Activity

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Print "Can't Be Done" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- ☐ Bowl, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Timer, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Plastic spoons, one for every kid
- ☐ Plain paper, one sheet for each Small Group
- ☐ Pencil, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Painter's tape, one roll for each Small Group

Groups

Take a Snapshot

- ☐ Index cards, four for every kid
- ☐ Pencils, one for every kid
- ☐ Optional: Coloring supplies, enough for each Small Group to share

Bible Story Extension

- ☐ Index cards or pieces of paper, at least 40 for each Small Group
- ☐ Pencils, five for each Small Group
- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ Timer, one for each Small Group

Discussion Questions

→ No Supplies Needed

Verses to Take with You

- ☐ Bibles, one for every kid
- ☐ Print "Mine the Verse" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, one half-sheet for every kid
- ☐ Pencils, one for every kid
- ☐ Coloring supplies, enough for each Small Group to share

Make It Personal with Prayer

- ☐ Index cards, one for every kid
- ☐ Pencils, one for every kid

Home

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue app** and **ParentCue.org**

WEEK

THREE

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

See the Getting Ready pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare. Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- Opener
- Worship
- Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are listed as optional)
- Conversation Starter
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Application Activity: Take a Snapshot
2. Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions
3. Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You
4. Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Devotionals for Kids
- Parent Cue Card (print or email)
- [Parent Cue App](#) and [ParentCue.org](#)

✦ Need activities for a K-5th group? Check out the 2nd-3rd grade guide.

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Daniel and the Lions' Den

Daniel 6

Conversation Starter

When have you felt alone?

Bottom Line

God is always with you.

Memory Verse

"Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak"

Isaiah 40:31 (NIV)



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a special need, learning difference, or disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro tips.

SOCIAL

Opening Activity



What You Need

- ☐ Offering Container
- ☐ Blindfolds or bandanas
- ☐ Cones or various obstacle course objects
- ☐ Floor tape



Inclusive Pro Tips

Keep the obstacle course safe, spaced out, and easy to navigate (no running or jumping required).

Allow kids to participate as the one who gives instructions if the obstacle course and blindfold make them anxious.

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for your group before they arrive. Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God that He goes with you through every moment of your life. Ask God to help the preteens know that He is with them, and to walk confidently into all situations fully aware of His presence. Ask God to raise up a generation of preteens who love Him more than approval, status, or likes. Pray that they'd become aware of the Holy Spirit. Ask God to give them boldness to hear Him and follow Him in every tough moment—online and in person.

1. Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high-five, fist bump, or a wave.
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
3. Before you begin:
 - Mark a start and finish line in your group area.
 - Set up the cones or various obstacle course objects in between the lines.
4. Divide the kids into teams of 4-6.
5. Explain the game:
 - "For the first part, one kid from each team will be blindfolded. When I say 'go,' they will try to walk through the obstacle course (alone and without any help or guidance) for the first half of the course."
 - Once they reach the halfway point, their team can walk alongside and use only their voices to guide them through the rest of the course.
6. After each turn, swap roles so that each kid experiences both "alone" (no guidance for a few steps) and "not alone" (with a guide).
7. After every kid who wants a turn to be blindfolded gets one, gather the group to discuss.

② What You Say

"Great teamwork, friends! How did it feel trying to walk the course on your own? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)** That was pretty tough, right? I mean, you couldn't see or hear anyone!

"How did it feel to have someone with you, guiding you through it? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)**

"Today, we'll hear a true story from the Bible about Daniel, who faced something WAY scarier than this—but he kept putting his confidence in God and discovered he was never alone. Let's find out why Daniel could have so much confidence. C'mon!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/5

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Opaque cups
- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Pencils



① What You Do

1. Give every kid a cup, an index card, and a pencil.
2. Ask: "When have you felt alone or nervous at school, home, or anywhere else?"
3. Invite the kids to write (or draw) their answer on one side of their card.
4. Ask: "What's something you discovered about God through Daniel's story?"
→ Kids might say, God is always with me, God is trustworthy, God is in control, etc.
5. Invite the kids to write (or draw) their answer on the other side of their card.
6. Instruct them to fold the card and drop it in their cup.
7. Gather in a circle. Let kids share what they wrote (if they'd like).

Talk Together

1. Hold up a cup. Say: "We can't see what's inside the cup. In the same way, we can't always see God, but He is always with us, just like He was with Daniel. Daniel trusted God, even when he couldn't see Him, and God heard his prayers."
2. Say: "The same God who shut the mouths of lions for Daniel is the God who listens to you, walks with you, and goes with you everywhere you go."
3. Ask: What is some evidence that shows that God wants to be close to you and with you all of the time?
4. Say: "God wants to be your friend so much that Jesus came and gave His life to pay for your sins so that nothing could separate you from Him. Then, when you choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit, God's very Spirit, comes to live inside of you. God is closer than close! God has done all of this to be close to you!"
5. Ask: What can you do to remind yourself that God is always with you? (It can help us remember that God is with us if we talk to Him all the time throughout our day, about everything.)
6. Ask: There are a lot of times when we don't feel like God is with us. How can we remind ourselves that He is?
7. Say: "When it doesn't feel like God is with us, sometimes it helps to remember the times when He was with us in the past, even when we didn't feel Him. If we look back on our lives, we will see that He has been with us every minute!"

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Clear plastic cups
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Large, clear storage bin filled with water
- ☐ Plastic tablecloth

Inclusive Pro Tips



If some kids prefer not to get their hands wet, let them be the observers or helpers who cheer on and report results.

① What You Do

Before you begin → Watch this video for an example of the experiment: bit.ly/46hx5QX

1. Lay out the plastic tablecloth. Set the bin filled with water in the center.
2. Give every kid one paper towel and one clear cup.
3. Invite them to gather around the tablecloth.
4. Kick off with these Bible Story Review questions:
 - Why was Daniel thrown into the lions' den in the first place?
 - How did Daniel respond when he knew he could get in trouble for praying?
 - What happened in the morning when the king went to check on Daniel after Daniel had spent the night in the lions' den?

Explore Together

1. Direct the kids to wad up the paper towel and firmly wedge it into the bottom of the empty cup so it won't fall out or fall down when the cup is turned upside down.
2. Ask, "What do you think will happen if I push this cup straight down into the water, upside down?"
3. Say: "Push your cup straight down (don't tilt!) into the water until it's fully submerged. Then, remove the cup and pull out the paper towel—it will be dry!"
4. Invite every kid to take turns giving it a try.
5. Ask: "Why do you think the paper towel was able to stay dry?"
 - Explain that the air trapped in the cup acts like a barrier, protecting the paper towel from getting wet.

Talk Together

1. Explain that Daniel was surrounded by danger, but God protected him, like the air protected the paper towel. Daniel walked out of the lions' den untouched because God was with him!
2. Ask:
 - Why do you think Daniel wasn't touched or hurt by the lions? Who protected him, even when it looked impossible?
 - If God can keep Daniel safe in a den full of lions, what does that tell us about who God is when we're facing scary or impossible situations?

Make It Personal → Share about a time when you faced a scary situation, but how remembering that God was with you helped you get through it. How did you remind yourself that God was with you?

Preteen

Small Group

November — Week 3

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed



① What You Do

1. When have you felt alone?
2. When have you felt like you were standing alone for something you believed was right? What did you do?
→ How can you remember that God is with you in moments like that?
3. Why do you think God allowed Daniel to go through something so hard? What good came out of it?
4. What can you do to help remind yourself throughout the day that God is always with you?

Inclusive Pro Tips



Be sensitive to kids who may need extra time to process their thoughts and respond. Be patient and create a safe space where everyone has a chance to share when they're ready.

Frequently check for understanding during discussion by asking questions like, "Can someone share in their own words what we're talking about?"

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bible marked at Isaiah 40:31
- ☐ Key rings (like these: bit.ly/3TNmfuA)
- ☐ "Isaiah 40:31 Tags" Activity Page
- ☐ Regular hole punch
- ☐ Clear packing tape
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Prepare 2-inch cardstock circles

Inclusive Supplies:

- ☐ Pre-assembled key chains



Inclusive Pro Tips

Offer a few pre-assembled key chains for kids who need extra support or get overwhelmed by steps.

Pair kids up for buddy support—one can hold, the other can stick or punch.

① What You Do

1. Gather the kids in a circle.
2. Call on a kid to read Isaiah 40:31 from the Bible out loud.
3. Ask if there are any words that are unfamiliar to the kids in the verse.
4. Repeat the verse together.

Create Together

1. In the center of the circle, set out the:
 - Packing tape
 - Scissors
 - 2-inch cardstock circles
 - "Isaiah 40:31 Tags" Activity Page stickers
2. Invite the kids to create their very own key chain using the following steps.
 - Step 1: Grab a 2-inch cardstock circle.
 - Step 2: Select two stickers from the "Isaiah 40:31 Tags" Activity Page.
 - Step 3: Place a sticker on each side of the cardstock circle.
 - Step 4: Fully cover both sides of the circle with packing tape.
 - Step 5: Use scissors to cut the excess tape from around the edges.
 - Step 6: Use the hole punch to create a hole at the top of your circle.
 - Step 7: Attach the circle to a key ring.

Talk Together

1. "What's something that feels hard for you? How does this verse remind you that God is with you?"
2. "How could this key chain help you remember to pray or trust God in tough moments?"

→ *NOTE: Look for opportunities to have conversations about what it means to make a decision to follow Jesus! (If you need help with what to say, ask your ministry leader.)*

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders

- ① Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for.
- ② When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers.
- ③ Once they find the chapter, explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

GROUPS 5/5

Make It Personal with Prayer

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed



① What You Do

1. Gather the kids together.
2. Ask: "How does praying out loud make you feel?"
 - Some kids might say nervous, weird, or shy.
 - Say, "Daniel wasn't afraid to talk to God even when everyone could see him. He prayed with his windows open! (Daniel 6:10) Daniel was confident in God and knew that praying to God was nothing to be ashamed of."
 - Encourage the kids to close their eyes or look down to help focus.
3. Prompt the kids to pray for themselves out loud. It's okay if they want to pray silently.
 - Explain that it might feel awkward to pray, but focus on God and trust that He is listening!
 - Prayer suggestion: "God, help me trust You today. Help me be confident. Help me know You are always with me."
4. Then, prompt the kids to pray for someone else out loud.
 - It could be a friend, family member, teacher, or anyone who needs help or encouragement.
 - Prompt suggestion: "God, will You help [name] with [what they need]? Remind them that You love them and are always with them."
5. Close in prayer together. Thank God that we don't have to hide our prayers, that He hears us, and that He is always with us!

Getting Ready

Social

Welcome the kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Use this time to create space for them to connect with you and with each other by playing age-appropriate games, asking fun questions, and encouraging friendly interactions. This is a great moment to help kids feel seen, known, and ready to experience today's story.

Groups

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

Home

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue app** and **ParentCue.org**

Social

Opening Activity

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Blindfolds or bandanas, one for every four kids
- ☐ Cones or various obstacle course objects, enough to create an obstacle course
- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group

Groups

Take a Snapshot

- ☐ Opaque cups, one for every kid
- ☐ Index cards, one for every kid
- ☐ Pencils, one for every kid

Bible Story Extension

- ☐ Clear plastic cups, one for every kid and Small Group Leader
- ☐ Paper towel, one for every kid and Small Group Leader
- ☐ Large, clear storage bin; one for each Small Group
 - *NOTE: The storage bin must be large enough to submerge a cup.*
- ☐ Plastic tablecloth, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Before group time:
 - *Fill the clear storage container with water (enough water to submerge the cup).*

Discussion Questions

→ No Supplies Needed

Verses to Take with You

- ☐ Bible marked at Isaiah 40:31, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Key rings (like these: bit.ly/3TNmfuA); one for every kid and Small Group Leader
- ☐ Print "Isaiah 40:31 Tags" on Avery #22807; two stickers for every kid and Small Group Leader
- ☐ Regular hole punch, one for each Small Group
- ☐ 2-inch circle hole punch, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Clear packing tape, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ Scissors, one pair for every kid
- ☐ White cardstock
- ☐ Before group time: Use the 2-inch hole punch to cut one circle out of the white cards for every kid.

Inclusive Supplies:

- ☐ Before group time: Use the supplies to pre-assemble several key chains.

Make It Personal with Prayer

→ No Supplies Needed

WEEK

FOUR

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

See the Getting Ready pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare. Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- Opener
- Worship
- Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are listed as optional)
- Conversation Starter
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Application Activity: Take a Snapshot
2. Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions
3. Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You
4. Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Devotionals for Kids
- Parent Cue Card (print or email)
- [Parent Cue App](#) and [ParentCue.org](#)

✦ Need activities for a K-5th group? Check out the 2nd-3rd grade guide.



THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Esther

Esther 1-10

Conversation Starter

When has someone stood up for you?

Bottom Line

God can help you stand up for others.

Memory Verse

"Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak"

Isaiah 40:31 (NirV)



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a special need, learning difference, or disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro tips.

SOCIAL

Opening Activity

What You Need

- ☐ Offering Container
- ☐ Floor Tape



① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God that He sees and values every voice, no matter the age! Recall an age-appropriate story about a time when you were able to stand up for someone who needed help or speak up with love and courage. Ask God to help preteens understand that they don't need to wait until they're older to be used by Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to help them see the people around them who need to see God's love, kindness, and truth, and to act on what He shows them.

1. Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high-five, fist bump, or a wave.
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
3. Before you begin:
 - Create a large circle or square with floor tape.
4. Divide the kids into two teams (or more, depending on your group's size).
5. Explain: "Each team will choose a kid whom they'll protect. That kid's identity must stay a secret!"
6. Direct the teams to secretly choose a kid to protect, and then stand on opposite sides of the tape zone you created.
7. On your "go!" the teams will walk (no running!) toward the zone, trying to get as many teammates—including the selected kid—inside as possible.
8. In the zone, the teams must try to protect their selected kid from being tagged by the other team.
9. Each opposing team can try to gently tag three people from the other team.
10. If they tag a regular player, that player steps out for one round. If they tag the real VIP, the round is over!
11. Play several rounds, switching selected kids each time.

② What You Say

"That was so fun! How did it feel to be protected by your team? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)**"

"Standing up for others can feel hard and complex. Sometimes we don't know who needs us to stand up for them, or what will happen if we do.

"Today, in our true story from the Bible, we'll discover a woman named Esther who stood up for others even though it was risky for her. Let's go hear more and discover how God can help us stand up for others too!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Inclusive Pro Tips



Remind the group to use gentle tags if tagging and to include everyone.

GROUPS 1/5

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ Floor Tape


① What You Do

1. Mark a start line in your group area.
2. Invite the kids to stand behind it.
3. Stand a few feet away.
4. Explain that you will read scenarios one at a time.
→ Everyone who thinks they could do that challenge for someone with God's help will take a step forward.
5. The kids will continue to take steps forward after you read each scenario.
6. Frequently ask kids to share why they would or wouldn't do it, and how God could help.

Challenge Scenarios

1. Invite a new kid to sit with you at lunch.
2. Stand up and say something when someone is being teased.
3. Share something important about your faith with someone.
4. Say "I'm sorry" first, even when it's hard.
5. Include someone who is often left out.
6. Pray for a friend, out loud.
7. Start a lemonade stand to raise money for a good cause.
8. Help a kid on your basketball team who is having trouble with their free throws.
9. Join someone who is eating lunch alone in the cafeteria.
10. Pause your game to go check on a classmate who is upset at recess.

Talk Together

1. How does it make you feel when someone stands up for you?
2. Explain that we aren't meant to do life alone, which means we are to help each other when we need help. God wants to help us live confidently in Him so we can stand up for others—so that more people will come to know Him!
3. Explain that we don't have to stand up for people alone. When we choose to follow Jesus, God's very Spirit moves inside of us. Throughout the day, He will say to our heart, "Hey, do you see that lonely kid over there? Let's go sit with him." God will show us what to do and help us do it!

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ "Block Sort" Activity Pages


① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into two teams.
2. Instruct each team to sit together in a circle.
3. Give each group a set of cards from the "Block Sort" Activity Page.
4. Say, "You'll work as a team to sort these cards! Think about which words describe someone who is putting their confidence in God, like Esther from our Bible Story. As your team chooses a word, use it as a 'block' to help build a castle or tower in the middle of your team!"
5. Remind the kids that some words describe someone whose confidence is in God, and some don't.
6. As they finish, review the chosen words and discuss why each one fits (or doesn't).
7. Discuss why the other words do not fit.

Make It Personal → Share about a time you stood up for someone, or for a group of people who needed help, even when it felt tough. Explain how God helped you do it!

Inclusive Pro Tips



Create smaller groups for kids who might want a more personal conversation.

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed



① What You Do

1. When has someone stood up for you?
2. Why do you think it's important to stand up for others, even if it's risky or uncomfortable?
→ What might happen if no one stands up for someone who needs help?
3. Just like Esther, God has placed you to live exactly where you are at this exact time—in your family, in your class, on your team, in your church. Since He has placed you exactly where you are to help, who do you think He wants you to help? What do you think He wants you to do?
4. What do you think it sounds like or feels like when God is guiding you to help or stand up for someone?

Inclusive Pro Tips



Be sensitive to kids who may need extra time to process their thoughts and respond. Be patient and create a safe space where everyone has a chance to share when they're ready.

Frequently check for understanding during discussion by asking questions like, "Can someone share in their own words what we're talking about?"

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Pencils



Inclusive Pro Tips

If a kid doesn't want to write or read their fear, let them draw a picture or keep their card private.

① What You Do

1. Give every kid a Bible.
2. Invite them to look up Isaiah 40:31 using the Bible Navigation Tips.
3. Ask if there are any words that are unfamiliar to them in the verse.
4. Repeat the verse together.

Connect Together

1. Give each kid an index card and a pencil.
2. Invite them to write down one fear, worry, or doubt they sometimes have without putting their name on the card.
3. Collect all the cards, shuffle them, and place them in a pile.
4. Then, let each kid draw a random card (making sure they don't pick their own).
5. Take turns reading each card aloud. As a group, brainstorm words of truth from God's Word (Isaiah 40:31 or other encouraging promises) that could help with that fear or doubt.
6. Repeat until all of the cards have been shared.

Talk Together

1. Encourage the kids that God can give them the strength and confidence to stand up for others!

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders

- ① Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for.
- ② When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers.
- ③ Once they find the chapter, explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

Preteen

Small Group

November — Week 4

GROUPS 5/5

Make It Personal with Prayer

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ Small playground ball



① What You Do

1. Instruct the kids to sit with you in a circle.
2. Say, "We all need confidence and courage, just like Esther—and God wants to give it to us every day! Today, we will pray for each other. When I toss you the ball, you can pray out loud or silently for God to give us the confidence to stand up for others. Ready?"
3. Start the prayer, and pass the ball to a kid in the circle.
4. Continue passing the ball around until every kid gets a chance to pray.
5. Close in prayer together.

Getting Ready

Social

Welcome the kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Use this time to create space for them to connect with you and with each other by playing age-appropriate games, asking fun questions, and encouraging friendly interactions. This is a great moment to help kids feel seen, known, and ready to experience today's story.

Groups

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

Social

Opening Activity

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group

Groups

Take a Snapshot

- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group

Bible Story Extension

- ☐ Print "Block Sort" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, two sets for each Small Group

Discussion Questions

→ No Supplies Needed

Verses to Take with You

- ☐ Bibles, one for every kid
- ☐ Index cards, one for every kid
- ☐ Pencils, one for every kid

Make It Personal with Prayer

- ☐ Small playground ball, one for each Small Group

Home

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue app** and **ParentCue.org**

WEEK

FIVE

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

See the Getting Ready pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare. Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- Opener
- Worship
- Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are listed as optional)
- Conversation Starter
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Application Activity: Take a Snapshot
2. Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions
3. Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You
4. Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Devotionals for Kids
- Parent Cue Card (print or email)
- [Parent Cue App](#) and [ParentCue.org](#)

✦ Need activities for a K-5th group? Check out the 2nd-3rd grade guide.



THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Nehemiah

Nehemiah 1-4, 6:1-15

Conversation Starter

What do you need help with?

Bottom Line

God can help you do big things.

Memory Verse

"Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak"

Isaiah 40:31 (NIV)



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a special need, learning difference, or disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro tips.

SOCIAL

Opening Activity

What You Need

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ "Puzzle Cards" Activity Page
- ☐ Timer
- ☐ Pencils



① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for your group before they arrive. Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Recall an age-appropriate story about a time God helped you finish something you started, even when it was hard. Maybe you wanted to give up, but pushed through because you knew God was with you. Ask God to help preteens grow in perseverance and faith in Jesus. Pray they'll understand that the work God has for them matters. Ask God to help the kids learn how to go through all of life with Him so they will do all things together with Him!

1. Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high-five, fist bump, or a wave.
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
3. Divide the kids into three groups.
4. Explain how to play:
 - "Your group will get a set of cards with a word on them. You'll have 30 seconds to put together a fun sentence with the letters in each word."
 - For example, if the card says "LAKE" the group might write, "Little artists kept eating."
 - Groups can write their sentences on the back of the cards.
5. For each round, one at a time, call out one of the six words.
6. Give the kids 30 seconds to write their silly sentence.
7. When the time is up, call out the word and instruct each group to share their silly sentence for that word.
8. The words are:
 - BUILD
 - PRAY
 - WORK
 - GATES
 - WALL
 - TEAM
9. Reset the 30-second timer for each round.
10. Gather the kids to discuss.

② What You Say

"Awesome teamwork, friends! You know, every word you just created a silly sentence for has something to do with today's true story from the Bible.

Build, pray, work, gates, wall, team? A man named Nehemiah faced tough challenges, but he asked God for help, worked with others, and never gave up hope. Let's go discover how God helped Nehemiah, and how He can help you do big things too!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Inclusive Pro Tips



Let the kids call out their answers each round instead of writing them on the cards.

GROUPS 1/5

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Sticky notes
- ☐ Pencils



① What You Do

1. Gather the kids together in a circle.
2. Give every kid at least two sticky notes and a pencil.
3. Say, "Nehemiah noticed God's people were feeling hopeless. He was confident in the assignment God gave him!"
4. Ask: "What things in our world feel broken?"
→ Kids might say bullying, people without food, lying, loneliness, or the pressure to be perfect.
5. Invite the kids to write or draw one idea per sticky note.
6. Ask: "How might God use you to help rebuild what's broken?"
→ Kids might say starting a kindness club, helping a neighbor, or praying for someone.
7. Collect the sticky notes and set them aside for the Prayer Activity

Talk together

1. Explain: "Nehemiah heard of something that was broken and didn't just ignore it. He trusted God and did something BIG! He inspired others to help too."
2. Ask: What's something you want to help rebuild in our world?
→ Give the kids some examples of big things God might ask them to do, like work with their family to have a garage sale to raise money for a cause.
3. Encourage the kids to think about the things they're passionate about. It's likely that God has placed that thing on their heart to help others!
4. Explain that the job in front of you might seem big—so was building a wall for Nehemiah. But Nehemiah asked God for everything he needed every step of the way, and God helped him. You can do the same thing! God loves to help you with the big thing that's on your heart!

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Floor tape
- ☐ Prepared index cards with obstacles written on them
- ☐ Cones and other obstacle course items

Inclusive Pro Tips

For an option with less movement, use the cards as discussion points (answer the questions that correspond to them) instead of the obstacle course.



① What You Do

1. Set up a simple obstacle course in your group area.
2. Use floor tape to mark a start and finish line for the course.
3. Lay the index cards in various places in the course.
4. Explain that in the obstacle course, there are cards with challenges Nehemiah faced.
5. Instruct the kids to line up behind the start line. Let them race through the course one at a time.
6. As kids move through, encourage each kid to pause at one of the index cards and read the obstacle card aloud.
7. When the kid reads an obstacle from an index card, pause and ask the questions that correspond to that specific obstacle.
8. Encourage the kids who complete the course later to choose an index card that has not been chosen, or hasn't been chosen as often.
9. Let kids share and encourage each other to "finish the course."

Questions for Each Obstacle

1. Fear:
 - "What did Nehemiah do when he was afraid?" (He prayed and kept going. For example, he asked the king for what he needed, even though he was scared.)
 - "What could you pray if you are facing something big and you are afraid?"
2. Enemies:
 - "How did Nehemiah respond when enemies were threatening to attack him?" (He asked God for help and stationed people to get ready to fight.)
 - "What can you pray when someone is making fun of you?"
3. Exhaustion:
 - "How did Nehemiah respond when he was tired?" (He kept going because he knew the work he was doing was good.)
 - "What can you pray to God when you're tired of doing good?"
4. Discouragement:
 - "How did Nehemiah respond when his enemies tried to convince him to give up?" (He asked God to make him strong to finish the work.)
 - "How do you encourage others when they want to quit?"

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed



① What You Do

1. What do you need help with?
2. Nehemiah went to God for everything he needed. What can you do to remind yourself that you can ask God for everything?
3. How does knowing God goes with you through everything give you more confidence?
4. What can you do to remind yourself that God is always with you?
5. Who did Nehemiah go to for help first—God or people? Why do you think that matters?
6. Nehemiah didn't rebuild the wall alone. He needed help. God helped him through people. Who are the people God has put in your life to help you with big things?

Inclusive Pro Tips



Be sensitive to kids who may need extra time to process their thoughts and respond. Be patient and create a safe space where everyone has a chance to share when they're ready.

Frequently check for understanding during discussion by asking questions like, "Can someone share in their own words what we're talking about?"

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ "Origami Eagle" Activity Page
- ☐ "Origami Eagle Steps" Activity Page

Inclusive Supplies

- ☐ Several pre-made origami eagles



Inclusive Pro Tips

Make several origami eagles to give to kids who might struggle to put the art piece together.

① What You Do

1. Give every kid a Bible.
2. Invite them to look up Isaiah 40:31 using the Bible Navigation Tips.
3. Ask if there are any words that are unfamiliar to them in the verse.
4. Repeat the verse together.

Create Together

1. Give every kid an "Origami Eagle" Activity Page and a pair of scissors.
2. Encourage the kids to cut out the square on the "Origami Eagle" Activity Page.
3. Display the pre-made origami eagle so the kids can see the final product!
4. Walk through the steps together using the "Origami Eagle Steps" Activity Page.
5. Once everyone is done, let them write "Isaiah 40:31" with a marker on their origami eagle wherever they'd like.

Talk Together

1. Encourage the kids to set the eagle somewhere at home where they can be reminded that as they keep putting their trust and hope in God, He will give them the strength to do big things!

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders

- ① Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for.
- ② When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers.
- ③ Once they find the chapter, explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

Preteen

Small Group

November — Week 5

GROUPS 5/5

Make It Personal with Prayer

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Sticky notes from Take a Snapshot (Application Activity)



① What You Do

1. Instruct the kids to join you in a seated circle.
2. Set the sticky notes from earlier in the center of the circle.
3. Invite the kids to silently pick one note that stands out to them (not their own).
4. Direct the kids to read it and hold it as the group prays together.
5. Close in prayer together, thanking God for seeing every need, every big thing, and every broken thing! Thank God for giving the kids strength to do big things this week and always!

Getting Ready

Social

Welcome the kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Use this time to create space for them to connect with you and with each other by playing age-appropriate games, asking fun questions, and encouraging friendly interactions. This is a great moment to help kids feel seen, known, and ready to experience today's story.

Groups

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

Social

Opening Activity

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Print "Puzzle Cards" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, three sets for each Small Group
- ☐ Timer, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Pencils, one for each Small Group

Groups

Take a Snapshot

- ☐ Sticky notes, two for every kid
- ☐ Pencils, one for every kid

Bible Story Extension

- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ Index cards, four for each Small Group
- ☐ Marker, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Cones and other obstacle course items, enough to make an obstacle course
- ☐ Before group time: Write one of the following words on each index card:
 - fear
 - enemies
 - exhaustion
 - discouragement

Discussion Questions

→ No Supplies Needed

Verses to Take with You

- ☐ Bibles, one for every kid
- ☐ Scissors, one pair for every kid
- ☐ Print "Origami Eagle" Activity Page on paper, one for every kid
- ☐ Print "Origami Eagle Steps" Activity Page on paper, two for each Small Group
- ☐ Markers, one for every kid
- ☐ Before group time: Make one origami eagle to show the kids as an example

Inclusive Supplies:

- ☐ Before group time: Put together several origami eagles for your group.

Make It Personal with Prayer

- ☐ Sticky notes from "Take a Snapshot" (Application Activity)

Home

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue app** and **ParentCue.org**